

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Rep. Harry Mitchell said today he was deeply disappointed by President Bush's veto earlier today of the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act. The act would have enabled the federal government to conduct expanded research involving embryonic stem cells.

"I am deeply disappointed by the President's veto," said Mitchell. "A majority of the American people and a majority of Congress believe this is an investment we should make."

Mitchell was joined by pro-cure Congressional colleagues including Reps. Diana DeGette (Colo.), Rahm Emanuel (Ill.), Louise Slaughter (N.Y.), Ed Pearlmuter (Colo.), Patrick Murphy (Pa.), Ron Klein (Fla.), and Tim Mahoney (Fla.)

The House first passed H.R. 3, the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act in January by a vote of 253 to 174. In April, the Senate passed a slightly modified version, S.5, by a vote of 63 to 34. Earlier this month, the House passed the Senate's version by a vote of 247 to 176.

Mitchell delivered the following remarks at today's press conference:

"I believe the best way we can honor life is by investing in science and ethical research.

"Congress rarely gets an opportunity to offer hope to the millions of Americans who suffer from diseases such as Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, Lou Gehrig's and Huntington's Disease.

"A growing majority of the American people, including my constituents in Arizona 's Fifth Congressional District - believe this is an investment we should make.

"They support this research because they understand that we have a moral obligation to invest in embryonic stem cell research because it provides the best hope for a cure for these diseases and many others.

"They were proud when Congress passed this legislation, and I know they are disappointed by today's veto."